

THE HATS PARIS WEARS IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH

It Is Difficult to Speak of These Bonnets Without Breaking Into Exaggeration, Says Bessie Ascough—Curious Torpedo-Boat Shapes Becoming Popular—Single Rose Trimmings.

I HAVE just seen a group of most fascinating millinery models—the very latest designs and each one a thing of beauty which would certainly bring joy to the heart of the woman who might happily possess it.

It is really difficult to speak of the new hats and toques without breaking into language which might seem exaggerative. They are so original and so entirely becoming. I really think that the fashions of this tragic year—gowns and hats alike—are going to reach the highest note of perfection; they promise to be picturesque, practical and pretty.

One of our famous milliners has launched an effective trimming for simple velvet toques—a trimming which consists of a single rose, exquisitely formed, made of metallic gauze in such shades as deep red, old rose, Egyptian blue and dull purple. These gleaming roses are framed in frosted silver leaves and the stalks are black or very dark brown. A flower of this order is placed at the side of a picturesque velvet toque or cap, and gives a delightful touch of rich color.

I have seen large violets made of the same metallic gauze, the leaves being in black velvet or dark green satin. Of course, flowers of this kind are frankly artificial; they make no attempt to imitate nature.

We are borrowing our fashions of 1915 from various Old World sources. Many of the new gowns and coats are early Victorian in outline; very many of the new hats recall the fashions of 1880-'82.

CURIOUS BOAT BECOMING POPULAR.

For example, the curious "boat" shapes, which are rapidly becoming popular. These hats differ from the torpedo models so far as the brim is concerned. They have the torpedo outline, but the turned-up brim suggests a modified Napoleon hat worn the wrong way. Curiously enough this uncommon shape is generally becoming. It is eminently distinguished, and it can be expressed in silk beaver, velvet, satin or peau de soie, to suit individual taste.

I must warn you that in choosing a new hat or toque special attention should be paid to the outline of the dress or coat collar, for collars are going to play one of the most important roles in the comedy of fashion this year. The décolleté neck is a thing of the past, at least the décolleté neck of 1914. We have not yet gone back to net and chiffon guimpes, but we are marching rapidly in that direction.

At the present moment all the new blouses and dress corsages are finished with a high collar, which frames the back of the head and is fastened in front by a length of narrow velvet ribbon or a jaunty little black satin bow. These collars are made of tulle, chiffon or washing crepe; they are also made of the dress material and bordered with narrow bands of fur. Invisible supports keep them in place.

I have made special mention of these new collars because they will not permit themselves to be overlooked. They are so uncommon in design that they attract immediate attention, and it will be easily understood that they have to be considered when the question of a new hat or toque arises. The toque which may look delightful with a décolleté blouse may not look at all so well when worn in conjunction with a high collar.

UBIQUITOUS IS THE WING TRIMMING.

The Parisian milliners display genius when arranging wings on a simple morning hat. They place these trimmings in exactly the right spot and manage to obtain a superb effect with such simple materials as a black velvet toque shape and a pair of white or black wings.

I have seen wings introduced on many of the early spring models and nearly all give the black-upon-white or white-upon-black effect. A lovely morning hat was a torpedo shape in raven's wing blue peau de soie, which had at the left side two thin white wings, one curving up over the crown and the other curving down over the hair. It was an absolutely simple model, but very chic.

THE MOYEN AGE OUTLINE.

A gown I saw this week may be fitly described as delightful. The original model was created by one of the most famous dressmakers in the Place Vendôme, and the moment I saw it I determined to bring its charms before the notice of my readers.

It was such a wearable, practical dress—just the sort of a thing that a girl who wished to dress well in all circumstances would like to have in her wardrobe. For it was a gown which could be worn with advantage at almost any time.

The sheath underdress, composed of dull black satin, was strictly moyen âge in outline. It was a one-piece dress which moulded the bust and hips and was exaggeratedly wide at the hem. The sleeves of this satin robe were long and tight, the wrists as well as the high collar being finished with bands of skunk. Over this sheath robe there was a picturesque coat tunic made of soft navy blue serge.

THE FASHIONABLE TREND IN GOWNS.

This garment was sleeveless, and was fastened down the front with large black satin buttons; a satin sash outlined the hips, the ends being tied in a loose bow at the back. This model may be accepted as the very latest and newest idea. On such lines as these the best gowns of the spring and summer seasons will be created. And I wish specially to draw attention to the square opening, modest in size, at the neck. It is one of the new ideas which have suddenly achieved popularity.

Every second gown created by our well known dressmakers has the neck finished in this manner, and the small, high collar, which hardly shows in front, is rapidly becoming ubiquitous. These collars are charming when made of skunk, musquash, mink or ermine. They are so cleverly wired that they seem to frame the back of the head without any artificial support, and are applied to dresses and jackets alike.

DULL BLACK SATIN AND NAVY BLUE SERGE AGAIN IN VOGUE.

The union of dull black satin and navy blue serge is immensely fashionable this year. I have seen some ideal house dresses made of the two materials, and also restaurant gowns, which, in the street, would be worn under a fur wrap.

Some of the latest moyen âge models are short in the skirt to the point of eccentricity, and the fact that the hem is so unexpectedly wide makes this shortness seem almost startling. These dresses are gored and are so carefully fitted that they display the outline of bust and hips as effectively as a jersey bodice might do. When a soft sash is introduced it is, as a rule, placed well down on the hips, and this accentuates the boyish appearance which belongs of right to the moyen âge robe.

Very many of the new models bear Russian names; for example, there is a delightful model for afternoon wear which has received the name of Petrograd. The materials were black charmeuse and navy blue serge, and at the waist and collar some lovely silk embroideries were introduced. In this case also the black satin sleeves were long and quite tight



REGAL and delicate are the soft drapings of this white mousseline de soie tea gown, whose only sternness is found in the crush girdle of black panne velvet embroidered in silver.

LAST lingering note of the Moyen-âge is found in this long, slender frock, which is loosely girdled in tete de negre. The material is crisp, old-red taffeta, embroidered in dull shades.

—in fact, they were skin tight from elbow to wrist. It was a simple little gown, which had a special cachet of its own.

A REVIVAL OF TAUPE AS A FUR AND AS A COLOR.

I have mentioned in several recent articles that the Parisian dressmakers are using quantities of lovely neutral tinted stuffs this season. Gray is seen in every possible shade, and gray-blue in such stuffs as charmeuse velvet and crepe de chine. At least two important dressmakers in the Rue de la Paix have given their votes in favor of taupe—as a color and as a fur.

Taupe colored velvet is a craze in certain circles, and this dainty material is frequently trimmed with bands of moleskin and with pale gold Servian embroideries. Taupe mirror velvet, in a fine clear shade, is also very popular for wide scarves and fancy muffs of the melon order, and bands of moleskin are used as trimming. For light mourning taupe colored cloth is now considered correct, and collars and cuffs of moleskin may even be introduced. Loose bunches of Czar violets lend a further touch of sadness to these creations, and the idea is an excellent one.

In reality a taupe colored gown is more correct for light mourning than a creation in black and white; mole-gray is a specially subdued tint and one which seems, naturally, to suggest sadness tinged with triumph.

Very few of the new models for street wear are trimmed with fur, except on collar and cuffs. We are already holding out our hands toward advancing spring, and in a very short time bands of marabou or feather trimming will take the place of fur borders on coats and tunics. It is a curious fact that we only consent to accept elaborate furs in midwinter and in midsummer.

In the spring and autumn we turn our attention to a lighter kind of trimming, but in the golden days of July and August white fox and sable

—not to speak of skunk—are always in great demand. The idea seems incongruous, but it is undeniably attractive. Lovely woman looks her loveliest when shrouded in white lace and muslin, with a straight scarf of white fox or ermine falling from her shoulders.

SLEEVES AND COLLARS ASSUME NEW SHAPES.

Although it was scarcely to be expected that no changes would be introduced in the early spring programme of dress, I must admit that there are many more than might have been looked for in those that I have seen already. Entertaining indeed are the great designers, and most interesting their materialized ideas.

Sleeve modes always occur first of all to the fashion chronicler as worthy of mention when changes are being discussed. The sleeves of this coming spring may be summed up upon the whole as long and plain, with a special intimation anent the severely tailored model "put in" like those of a man's coat and of the evening dress designs, which are semi-transparent and just a little full, covering the arms to the wrists and falling about the hands in plissé ruffles. One frock I have seen had gauntlets of black velvet with a quaint, outstanding frill of the fabric at the elbows, drawing attention to the sheath-like covering above and below, which was made of fine serge and clasped the arms like a moulding.

But it must not be imagined that there is any intention of abandoning those very comfortable and extremely becoming sleeves that are cut in one with the bodice or coat.

Japanese sleeves, as they are called, are part of the most piquant little boleros and short, loose jackets imaginable, and occur also in the type of comfortable and artistic house frock that has made already a great and deserved success.



THE navy blue serge suit, the lines of whose skirt cleverly parallel those of the short jacket, assumes a convincing air of simplicity despite the yoke, the intersecting straps and lower fullness. The close fitting bodice of this walking dress is a new feature. It is of gray green chiffon velvet, with narrow fringe of skunk, and is appliqued in steel tissue and steel beads.

THE rich neutral shades of the third grosgrain and panne velvet street dress, sand and tete de negre, are brilliantly offset by the unusual tab in front, embroidered in bronze, oriental green and vermillion.



THE daring shape of this hat, which is as small as beauty allows, is contradicted by the conservative coloring, navy blue straw and grosgrain ribbon, with a tiny posy of flowers in front. The other hat, of tall envelope shape, quaintly festooned with silk, velvet and beaded flowers in varying shades, is in a bronze green straw.